

SELF-ESTEEM AND COMMUNICATION STYLE OF GRADE 10 STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study attempts to assess the self-esteem and communication style of Grade 10 students. It was conducted in 2018-2019 academic year. The instruments used in the study were self-esteem questionnaires developed by Heatherton, T. F. & Polivy, J. (1991) and Norton's communication style questionnaires (1978). Pilot study was done with a sample of 100 Grade 10 students. In this study, a total sample of 827 Grade 10 students (350 males and 477 females) from Monywa Township participated. In the data analysis, descriptive statistics, independent sample *t* test, one-way ANOVA and Pearson chi-square test were used in this study. According to the descriptive statistics, the students in this study had the satisfactory self-esteem. According to the result of Pearson chi-square test, there was a positive association between self-esteem and communication style. So it is important to emphasize the self-esteem of students since a person with a high self-esteem may have good communication style. Good communication makes learning easier, helps students achieve goals, increase opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between students and teachers, and creates an overall positive experience. Based on the results of this study, conclusion, discussion, suggestions, and recommendation were made for the benefits of teaching and learning.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Communication, Communication Style

Introduction

As children go through school, they begin to understand and recognize differences between themselves and their classmates. Using social comparisons, children assess whether they did better or worse than classmates in different activities. These comparisons play an important role in shaping the child's self-esteem and influence the positive or negative feelings they have about themselves.

Self-esteem seems to affect a child's ability to learn and to behave in class. Self-esteem has been found to be related to forgiveness in close relationships, in that people with high self-esteem will be more forgiving than people with low self-esteem. While not all students with low self-esteem will do poorly in school, there is research that shows that low self-esteem can lead to less academic success (Daniel & King, 1997).

Students with higher self-esteem are more inclined to take an active part in their education than students with lower self-esteem (Phillips, Smith, Modaff, 2001). The lack of self-esteem can hinder motivation to learn, or develop friendships in students, or be poor communicators with others.

One endeavor of academic research on interpersonal communication is to find and describe individual differences in communication behavior. Only by knowing the current communication style of a person can be given on how to reasonably change communication behavior. So, students' self-esteem may influence communication style. The correspondence of self-esteem and communication style may impact students' ambitions.

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Objectives of the study

The main aim of the study is to investigate self-esteem and communication style of Grade 10 students. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study self-esteem and communication style of Grade 10 students with respect to gender, age, and subject combination.
2. To examine the relationship between self-esteem and communication style of Grade 10 students.

Definition of Key Terms

Self-esteem: It refers to a relatively permanent positive or negative feeling about self that may become more or less positives and negatives as individuals encounter and interpret success and failures in their daily lives (Osborne, 1993).

Communication: It (from Latin *communicare*, meaning “to share”) is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs and semiotic rules.

Communication Style: It is the way one verbally, nonverbally, and para verbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered or understood (Norton, 1978).

Materials and Method

Sample

A total of 827 students (male=350 and female=477) were randomly selected from Monywa Township.

Method

Descriptive research design and survey method was used in the present study.

Instrumentation

The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES) developed by Heatherton and Polivy (1991) (no of items=20) and Communicator Style Measure Questionnaire (CSM) developed by Norton (1978) (no of items=38) were used in this study.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem

In order to find out the students' self-esteem, specific questionnaires were used. In terms of descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation, maximum scores and minimum scores of students' self-esteem were presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Self-Esteem of Grade 10 students

Variable	<i>N</i>	Maximum Score	Minimum Score	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Self-Esteem	827	76	35	51.71	5.95

As shown in Table 1, the maximum score of students in self-esteem was 76 and minimum score was 35. The mean scores and standard deviation for the whole sample were 51.71 and 5.95 respectively. The students in this study had the satisfactory self-esteem because the mean score (51.71) was greater than the theoretical mean (50).

Descriptive Statistics of Sub Components for Self-esteem

The mean scores of the students' self-esteem according to three components were presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Self-Esteem by Different types of Components

Variables	N	No. of items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean %	SD
Performance	827	7	12	28	20.01	71.46	2.63
Social	827	7	7	27	15.65	55.89	3.00
Appearance	827	6	9	24	16.05	66.88	2.33

As shown in Table 2, the maximum scores of students' performance, social and appearance were 28, 27 and 24. The minimum scores of students' performance, social and appearance were 12, 7 and 9. The mean scores of students' performance, social and appearance were 20.01, 15.65 and 16.05.

Comparison of Self-Esteem by Gender

To find the difference between male and female students in self-esteem scores, descriptive analysis was conducted.

Table 3 Mean and Standard Deviation of Self-Esteem by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference
Self-Esteem	Male	350	52.13	5.804	.73
	Female	477	51.40	6.047	

The result of Table 3 showed that the mean score of male's self-esteem was 52.13 and that of female students was 51.40. It was found that the mean score of self-esteem for males exceeds 0.73 than that of females. Moreover, this study further investigated whether there was significant difference in self-esteem between males and females by using the independent sample *t* test. The result of *t* test was presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Result of Independent Sample *t* test for Self-Esteem by Gender

Variable	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference
Self-Esteem	1.75	825	.08	.73

According to the result of Table 4, there was no significant difference in the self-esteem between males and females ($t=1.75, p>0.05$).

Comparison of Students' Self-Esteem according to Students' Age

For comparing self-esteem by ages of students, the descriptive analysis was conducted and the results were shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Mean and Standard Deviation for Self-Esteem by Age

Ages	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Under 15	360	51.76	5.607	37	70
15	410	51.82	6.283	35	76
Over 15	57	50.53	5.591	35	64

Table 5 showed that there were differences in self-esteem according to ages of students. It was found that the self-esteem of students with 15 ages was the highest mean scores according to students' age.

In order to investigate whether there were significant differences among students' age in self-esteem, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. The result of ANOVA was shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Result of ANOVA for self-esteem according to students' age

Variable	Region Groups	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Self-Esteem	Between Groups	86.057	2	43.028	1.215	.297
	Within Groups	29183.542	824	35.417		
	Total	29269.599	826			

According to the result of Table 6, there was no significant difference in self-esteem according to students' age ($F=1.215, p>0.05$).

Comparison of Students' Self-Esteem according to Subject Combination

For comparing self-esteem of students by subject combination, the descriptive analysis was conducted.

Table 7 Mean and Standard Deviation for Self-Esteem by Subject Combination

Variable	Subject	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference
Self-Esteem	Combination 7	418	51.91	6.360	.41
	Combination 1	409	51.50	5.506	

The result of Table 7 showed that the mean score of students' self-esteem of combination 7 was 51.91 and that of combination 1 was 51.50. It was found that the mean score of students' self-esteem of combination 7 exceeds 0.41 than that of combination 1. Moreover, this study further investigated whether there was significant difference in self-esteem between combination 7 and combination 1 by using the independent sample *t* test. The result of *t* test was presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Result of Independent Sample t test for Self-Esteem by Subject Combination

Variable	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference
Self-Esteem	.979	825	.328	.41

According to the result of Table 8, there was no significant difference in the self-esteem according to subject combination ($t=.979, p>0.05$).

Descriptive Statistics for Communication Style

Descriptive analysis was used to know the pattern of score distribution on communication style of 827 high school students from Monywa Township in terms of *N* and percent %. The result of the analysis was described in Table 9.

Table 9 Percentage for Students' Communication Style

Communication Style	N	Percent (%)
Friendly	261	31%
Impression Leaving	15	2%
Relaxed	57	7%
Contentious	39	5%
Attentive	102	12%
Precise	99	12%
Animated	84	10%
Dramatic	55	7%
Open	66	8%
Dominant	49	6%
Total	827	100%

As shown in Table 9, the friendly style was 31%, the impression leaving style was 2%, the relaxed style was 7%, the contentious style was 5%, the attentive style was 12%, the precise style was 12%, the animated style was 10%, the dramatic style was 7%, the open style was 8% and the dominant style was 6%.

Therefore, the most common communication style was found in friendly style.

Descriptive Statistics of Different Styles for Communication Style

The mean scores of the students' communication style according to the ten components were presented in Table 10.

Table 10 Communication Style by Different types of Components

Variables	No. of items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean %
Friendly	4	5	16	12.06	75.35
Impression Leaving	4	4	16	9.40	58.77
Relaxed	4	5	16	9.99	62.42
Contentious	4	4	16	9.57	59.84
Attentive	3	4	12	8.30	69.19
Precise	4	4	16	10.67	66.70
Animated	4	4	16	10.39	64.96
Dramatic	4	4	16	10.09	63.05
Open	4	4	16	10.07	62.91
Dominant	3	3	16	7.48	62.37

As shown in Table 10, the maximum scores of students' friendly, impression leaving, relaxed, contentious, attentive, precise, animated, dramatic, open and dominant were 16, 16, 16, 16, 12, 16, 16, 16, 16 and 12.

The minimum scores of students' friendly, impression leaving, relaxed, contentious, attentive, precise, animated, dramatic, open and dominant were 5, 4, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4 and 3.

The mean scores of students' friendly, impression leaving, relaxed, contentious, attentive, precise, animated, dramatic, open and dominant were 12.06, 9.40, 9.99, 9.57, 8.30, 10.67, 10.39, 10.09, 10.07 and 7.48. Students have the highest mean score in friendly style among other styles.

It was found that students' friendly communication style was slightly higher than other communication styles.

Comparison of Communication Style by Gender

In order to investigate whether there was a significant difference between male and female in students' different communication styles, Chi-square and Phi was computed and the result was shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Crosstabulation of Gender and Communication Styles

G		CS									
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10
Male	Observed	95	9	23	20	50	34	28	32	38	21
	Expected	109.9	5.9	24.1	16.5	43.1	42.3	35.5	23.2	27.9	20.7
	% of Total	11.5%	1.1%	2.8%	2.4%	5.9%	4.1%	3.4%	3.9%	4.6%	2.5%
Female	Observed	165	5	34	19	53	66	56	23	28	28
	Expected	150.1	8.1	32.9	22.5	58.9	57.7	48.5	31.8	38.1	28.3
	% of Total	20.0%	0.6%	4.1%	2.3%	6.4%	8.0%	6.8%	2.8%	3.4%	3.4%

Chi-square=26.92(p=.001),Phi=.180

G=Gender, CS=Communication Style, C1=Friendly, C2=Impression Leaving, C3=Relaxed, C4=Contentious, C5=Attentive, C6=Precise, C7=Animated, C8=Dramatic, C9=Open, C10=Dominant

In a crosstabulation, the chi-square statistics was 26.92 ($p=.001$) and phi was .180. There was significant difference between the communication styles of males and females at 0.001 level (see in Table 4.14).

The strength of association was smaller than typical as the value of effect size, phi was 0.180 according to Cohen (1988), cited in Morgan et al., 2004. Thus, the gender affects on the communication styles of high school students.

It was also revealed that the most common communication style used by both male and female students was friendly style.

Comparison of Students' Communication Style according to Students' Age

For comparing communication style by ages of students, the descriptive analysis was conducted.

Table 12 Percentage of Communication Style by students' age

	Under 15		15		Over 15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Friendly	115	13.90%	126	15.24%	18	2.17%
Impresssion Leaving	7	0.85%	7	0.85%	0	0.0%
Relaxed	28	3.39%	27	3.26%	2	0.24%
Contentious	11	1.33%	24	2.90%	4	0.48%
Attentive	42	5.08%	50	6.05%	11	1.33%
Precise	49	5.92%	43	5.20%	8	0.97%
Animated	39	4.72%	43	5.20%	2	0.24%
	Under 15		15		Over 15	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dramatic	25	3.02%	29	3.51%	2	0.24%
Open	26	3.14%	33	3.99%	7	0.85%
Dominant	18	2.18%	29	3.51%	2	0.24%
Total	360	43.53%	411	49.71%	56	6.76%

Table 12 showed that there were differences in communication style according to ages of students. Chi-square was conducted to find more valid evidence in investigating the differences of students' communication style by their age level.

Table 13 Crosstabulation of Students' Age and Communication Styles

A		CS									
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10
Under 15	Observed	115	7	28	11	42	49	39	25	26	18
	Expected	113.2	6.1	24.8	17.0	44.8	43.5	36.6	3.9	28.7	21.3
	% Total	13.9%	0.8%	3.4%	1.3%	5.1 %	5.9%	4.7%	3.0%	3.1%	.2%
15	Observed	127	7	27	24	50	43	43	28	33	28
	Expected	128.9	6.9	28.3	19.3	51.1	49.6	41.6	27.3	32.7	24.3
	% Total	15.4%	0.8%	3.3%	2.9%	6.0%	5.2%	.2%	.4%	4.0%	.4%
Over 15	Observed	18	0	2	4	11	8	2	2	7	3
	Expected	17.9	1.0	3.9	2.7	7.1	6.9	5.8	3.8	4.5	3.4
	% Total	2.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	1.3%	1.0%	.2%	.2%	0.8%	0.4%
Chi-square=16.832 (p=.535), Phi=.143											

A=Age, CS=Communication Style, C1=Friendly, C2=Impression Leaving, C3=Relaxed, C4=Contentious, C5=Attentive, C6=Precise, C7=Animated, C8=Dramatic, C9=Open, C10=Dominant

According to Table 13, the result revealed that there was no significant difference in students' communication style in terms of age level (chi square=16.832, $p>0.05$). The strength of association was smaller than typical as the value of effect size, phi was .143 according to Cohen (1988), cited in Morgan et al., 2004. Therefore, students' age factor cannot be analyzed as one of the significant factors for students' communication style.

Comparison of Students' Communication Style according to Subject Combination

In order to investigate whether there was significant difference in students' different communication style according to subject combination, the chi-square statistics was used. The result was presented in Table 14.

Table 14 Crosstabulation of Subject Combination and Communication Styles

SCom		CS									
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10
Com 7	Observed	127	6	30	20	52	47	52	33	26	25
	Expected	131.4	7.1	28.8	19.7	52.1	50.5	2.5	27.8	33.4	24.8
	% Total	15.4%	0.7%	3.6%	2.4%	6.3%	5.7%	6.3%	4.0%	3.1%	3.0%
Com 1	Observed	133	8	27	19	51	53	32	22	40	24
	Expected	128.6	6.9	28.2	19.3	50.9	49.5	41.5	27.2	32.6	24.2
	% Total	16.1%	1.0%	3.3%	2.3%	6.2%	6.4%	3.9%	2.7%	4.8%	2.9%
Chi-square=10.833(p=.287),Phi=.114											

SCom=Subject Combination, Com 7=Combination 7, Com 1=Combination 1, CS=Communication Style, C1=Friendly, C2=Impression Leaving, C3=Relaxed, C4=Contentious, C5=Attentive, C6=Precise, C7=Animated, C8=Dramatic, C9=Open, C10=Dominant

Table 14 showed that there was no significant difference in student' communication style in relation to combination 7 and combination 1 (chi-square=10.833, $p>0.05$). Thus, it cannot be identified that students' subject combination affects on students' communication style.

The Association between Self-Esteem and Communication Style

A crosstabulation confirmed the association between different sub components of self-esteem and different communication style in Table 15.

Table 15 Association between Different Sub Components of Self-Esteem and Different Communication Style

		Communication Style										
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	
Self-Esteem	P	Observed	218	12	49	36	91	87	70	39	52	40
		Expected	218.2	11.7	47.8	32.7	86.4	83.9	70.5	46.2	55.4	41.1
		% of Total	26.4	1.5%	5.9%	4.4%	11.0	10.5	8.5%	4.7%	6.3%	4.8%
	S	Observed	20	1	7	2	6	8	5	6	6	4
		Expected	20.4	1.1	4.5	3.1	8.1	7.9	6.6	4.3	5.2	3.9
		% of Total	2.4%	0.1%	0.8%	0.2%	0.7%	1.0%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%
	A	Observed	22	1	1	1	6	5	9	10	9	5
		Expected	21.4	1.2	4.7	3.2	8.5	8.2	6.9	4.5	5.4	4.0
		% of Total	2.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	1.1%	1.2%	1.0%	0.6%
	Chi-square=20.752 (p=.292), phi=.158											

P = Performance, S = Social, A = Appearance

C1=Friendly, C2=Impression Leaving, C3=Relaxed, C4=Contentious, C5=Attentive, C6=Precise, C7=Animated, C8=Dramatic, C9=Open, C10=Dominant

According to Table 4.19, the result revealed that there was no significant association between different sub components of self-esteem and different communication style.

Table 16 Association of Self-esteem and Communication Style

		Value	<i>p</i>
Pearson Chi-square		20.752	.292
Normal by Normal	Phi	.158	.292
	Cramer's V	.112	.292
N of Valid Cases		827	

According to Table 16, the result indicated a positive association between self-esteem and communication style (chi-square=20.752, $p>0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that a person with a high self-esteem will have a good communication style.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings

In the present study, the survey study was conducted by drawing the sample of students in seven schools from rural and urban schools in Monywa Township during 2018-2019 academic year. The total sample was 827 students including 350 males and 477 females in Grade 10. Self-esteem in Grade 10 students was measured by self-esteem questionnaire of Heatherton, T. F. & Polivy, J. (1991). It contained 20 items and its reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.71. Communication Style in Grade 10 students was examined by Norton's communication style

questionnaires (1978). It included 38 items and its reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.79. These two questionnaires were examined by a 4-point Likert-type scale.

The components of self-esteem are performance, social and appearance. The components of communication style are friendly, impression leaving, relaxed, contentious, attentive, precise, animated, dramatic, open and dominant.

Gender Differences in Self-Esteem and Communication Style. Descriptive analysis for self-esteem by gender was performed and the result showed that females have lower self-esteem than males. The result of independent sample *t* test showed that there was no significant difference in self-esteem between male and female students. This is due to the fact that during the period from infancy to adolescence, students receive the same amount of parents and teachers' guiding to develop and improve self-esteem without differences between male and female. This finding was the same with the result of Simmons and Rosenberg (1975) who reported that girls were found to have lower self-esteem than boys during their adolescent year (cited in Harter, 1990). Other studies also stated that girls tend to exhibit lower self-esteem than boys did (cited in Quatman & Watson, 2001).

To analyze gender difference on the communication style, chi-square statistics was used and the result revealed that there was significant difference between the communication styles of males and females and the most common communication style of both male and female students was friendly style. So, it can be concluded that both adolescent males and adolescent females were friendly communicators. This may be because in adolescent stage, both male and female praise, and positively recognize the other when they communicate with others and they usually pay more affection to peer group organization. Moreover, males have more attention to be friendly with their friends or peers than females and thus the friendly communication style was more commonly found in males than females. This finding was the same to the result of the research studied by Cohen (1988) who found that there was significantly different in how the two genders perceive their communication style, and reported earlier results showing considerable actual differences in communication style between men and women.

Differences in Self-Esteem and Communication Style according to Age. According to the ANOVA results, it was found that there was no significant difference in self-esteem according to students' age. This may be the fact that self-esteem is stable because it slowly builds over time through personal experiences, such as repeatedly succeeding at various tasks or continually being valued by significant others. This result was in agreement with the previous research of Bohan (1973, cited in Chubb, Fertman & Ross, 1997) who reported that there was generally no significant difference between ages or gender.

Chi-square test was also used to analyze differences in communication style of Grade 10 students by age and the result revealed that there was no significant difference in communication styles of Grade 10 students in terms of age level. This may be because the students' communication style will not be changed quickly according to their age and it will be slowly changed based on their activities in their daily lives. This result was the same with the previous research that reports; Goals for the communication exchange as well as the gender and age of the communication pattern have been found no influence ratings of communication style (Simmons, R., 1987).

Differences in Self-Esteem and Communication Style by Subject Combination. According to the result of independent sample *t* test, there was no significant difference in the self-esteem according to subject combination. It can be assumed that because of attaining the same amount

of parents and teachers' guiding in developing self-esteem, self-esteem of combination 7 and combination 1 was not different.

Chi-square test was also used to analyze differences in communication style of Grade 10 students by subject combination and the result revealed that there was no significant difference in student' communication style in relation to combination 7 and combination 1.

Association between Self-Esteem and Communication Style. In order to investigate how associate self-esteem and communication style, chi-square test and phi was used. The result indicated a positive association between self-esteem and communication style. Thus, it can be concluded that a person with a high self-esteem may have good communication style. Performance and social self-esteem was most highly associated with friendly communication style and least associated with impression leaving style. Appearance self-esteem was most highly associated with friendly communication style and least associated with impression leaving style, relaxed style and contentious style.

Suggestion of the study

Guindon (1994) believes self-esteem plays a big role in how one interprets each other's communication. For example, a person with high self-esteem is more likely to interpret feedback as constructive rather than threatening because they perceive themselves as competent rather than inferior. Consequently, high self-esteem individuals will be less likely to engage in the problem communication styles of students because of their sense of identity and well-being. Lower self-esteem can lead to behavior problems (Guerra, Williams, & Sadek, 2011) and to increase aggression in some children (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005) (cited in Bauman, 2012).

Although an individual may have several communication styles, there is only one communication style that is predominant. For example, a person may have the dominant style, open style, and dramatic style, the dominant style may become his/her major style that is predominant and best represents the personality.

It is important to investigate students' communication styles. Communication plays very significant role in every field of people's lives. In order for any proper relationship, they have to learn to communicate effectively with each other. Through interaction with other people, they learn about each other.

Communication skills are important for students in social networking. Communication in group activities, debate and family functions help students to analyze their communication skills level and standard. In conversation, listening to other people opinions is very important to reach new conclusions about the subject. When communication is effective, both the students and the teachers benefit from their social context. Communication makes learning easier, helps students achieve goals, increases opportunities for expanded learning, strengthens the connection between students and teachers, and creates an overall positive experience.

Based on the findings of this research, there are some suggestions for the parents, other family members in the family such as aunts, uncles and grandparents, and teachers, especially. In order to improve communication style for adolescents, family members, especially parents should notice and consider the following.

- Family members should train adolescents to communicate effectively with others.
- Family members and teachers should know students' communication style and train them to be a good communicator.
- Family members should put right their needs in communicating with others.

- Family members should encourage adolescents to be friendly, open and precise in communicating with others.
- Family members should spend time together in recreational activities such as sports activities, trips, movies, plays and concerts by showing how to communicate effectively. In cultivating the adolescents to improve communication style not only parents but also teachers play a crucial role. Therefore the teachers should consider the following suggestions.
- Teachers should not merely focus on academic achievement of students.
- Teachers should try to develop students to be good communicators.
- Teachers should create more activities that enhance good communication style for students.

Not only parents but also teachers need to join hand in hand so that students' communication style will be improved. The understanding of how students communicate helps teachers to organize better communication processes in order to enhance communication efficiency and to reduce students' potential conflicts.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to offer respectful gratitude to Dr. Saw Pyone Naing (Rector, Sagaing University of Education), Dr. Myat Myat Thaw (Pro-rector, Sagaing University of Education) and Dr. Khin Hnin Nwe (Head of Department of Educational Psychology, Sagaing University of Education) who allowed me to do this research paper. I would also like to express my special gratitude to Daw Myint Myint Po (Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology, Sagaing University of Education) for her invaluable suggestions and great supports for this research. Finally, I would like to thank all students for their cooperation in data collection of this study.

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